

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

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SR-02 ORM-03 EB-11 TRSE-00 AGR-20 SCEM-02 INT-08

COME-00 /194 W

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O R 081130Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4457

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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AMCONSUL UDORN

AMEMBASSY VIENT*ANE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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7TH PSYOPS
COMUSSAG
III MAF
CINCPACAF

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PHNOM PENH 306

JOINT EMBASSY/DAO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MOPS, CB
SUBJECT: KHMER REPORT--JANUARY 8, 1974

GENERAL

1. THE ENEMY INCREASED PRESSURE AROUND PHNOM PENH DURING THE WEEK, MOUNTING A NEW DRIVE IN THE NORTHWEST SECTOR AND FIRING SCATTERED ROCKETS ON THE CITY AND NEARBY POCHENTONG AIRPORT. FRIENDLY FORCES, ON THE OTHER HAND, CLEARED THE ENEMY FROM THE LONG-INTERDICTED ROUTE 4 AND WERE THUS IN A BETTER POSITION TO REACT TO THE NEW CHALLENGE. ENEMY PROPAGANDA REACHED A PITCH REMINISCENT OF THE LAST DRY SEASON HIGH POINT, ADVISING FOREIGNERS AND KHMER TO LEAVE THE CAPITAL CITY. THE POLITICAL SCENE WAS QUIET AS THE LONG BORET GOVERNMENT, ENJOYING AT LEAST A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM OF CRITICISM, BEGAN TO MOVE FORWARD WITH ITS PROGRAM. THE NEW GOVERNMENT TOOK ONE OF ITS MOST IMPORTANT STEPS THIS WEEK BY ANNOUNCING ON JANUARY 3 A 25 PERCENT DEVALUATION OF THE RIEL, A NECESSARY PREREQUISITE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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PLANNED ECONOMIC REFORM. THE US IN THE MEANTIME PLEDGED ON JANUARY 4 TO MATCH CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ESF MADE BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN 1974 UP TO A TOTAL OF \$17.5 MILLION. SUPPLIES IN THE CAPITAL CITY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR WERE ADEQUATE ALTHOUGH A PROJECTED SHORTAGE OF INDUSTRIAL FUEL CAUSED SOME CONCERN. CONSCRIPTION CONTINUED TO LAG, BUT THE GOVERNMENT APPROVED PLANS TO KICK OFF A NEW CAMPAIGN SHORTLY.

POLITICAL

2. A PRESIDENTIAL DECREE DATED JANUARY 7 NAMED NINE NEW UNDER SECRETARIES OF STATE TO THE LONG BORET GOVERNMENT. INITIAL PLANS APPARENTLY CALLED FOR 17, BUT A MORE MANAGEABLE NUMBER WAS REACHED. THE NINE INCLUDE THREE REPUBLICANS, THREE SOCIO-REPUBLICANS AND THREE TECHNICIANS. COMMENT: THESE APPOINTMENTS AMOUNT FOR THE MOST PART TO POLITICAL PAYOFFS, BUT SHOULD NOT MEASUREABLY AFFECT THE EFFICIENCY OF THE CABINET.

3. THE SOCIO-REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS PROVISIONALLY SET ITS CONGRESS TO ELECT A NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR JANUARY 20. AS NOW PLANNED, THE CONGRESS WILL BE ATTENDING BY ALL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, 140 "FOUNDING MEMBERS" OF THE PARTY, 48 REPRESENTATIVES FROM PHNOM PENH AND 12 REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH PROVINCE OR SOME 600 DELEGATES IN ALL. PARTY OFFICIALS ESTIMATED THAT THE AGENDA WILL CONSIST SIMPLY OF ONE DAY OF OPEN DISCUSSIONS AND ONE DAY FOR SELECTION OF A NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE. SHOULD THE SECURITY SITUATION IN PHNOM PENH NOT IMPROVE BY JANUARY 20, THE CONGRESS MAY BE POSTPONED, PARTY OFFICIALS INDICATED.

4. WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF A BREAK-THROUGH IN CONTACTS WITH THE KHMER ROUGE PROMPTED AN IMMEDIATE DENIAL FROM PRIME MINISTER AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER LONG BORET. THE PRESS REPORTS CLAIMED A KHMER DOCTOR, MOK LEAEYN WOULD BE LOVRNOL'S REPRESENTATIVE TO NEGOTIATIONS IN VIENTIANE. LONG BORET DENIED THAT GRUNK HAD PROPOSED SUCH TALKS. COMMENT: MOK LEAN HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR CLAIMED CONTACTS WITH SENIOR IN-COUNTRY GRUNK PERSONALITIES BUT HAS PRODUCED NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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WILLING TO NEGOTIATE. THE DOCTOR HAS RECENTLY TALKED ABOUT HIS EFFORTS WITH THE PRESS, AND THE RESULTING PUBLICITY HAS UNDOUBTEDLY DIMINISHED HIS ALREADY QUESTIONABLE UTILITY AS AN INTERMEDIARY.

5. CONSCRIPTION STATISTICS CONTINUED A SLOW DECLINE. IN THE PERIOD JANUARY 2-7, 179 MENT WERE SENT TO THE RECRUITMENT CENTER. OVERALL, 13,335 MEN HAVE REPORTED TO THE RECRUITMENT CENTER OF WHOM 11,623 EVENTUALLY ARRIVED AT THE TRAINING CENTERS.

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6. ON JANUARY 4 THE PRIME MINISTER, FANK C-IN-C, DEFENSE MINISTER AND INTERIOR MINISTER DREW UP PLANS TO REENERGIZE THE FAILING CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN. THEY PLAN TO UPGRADE MANPOWER LISTS IN THE CAPITAL AND WILL INSTALL SPECIAL GENDARMERIE TEAMS AT EACH CITY DISTRICT TO ENFORCE THE CONSCRIPTION LAW. IN ADDITION, SPECIAL TEAMS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO KEY PROVINCES TO HELP LAUNCH PROVINCIAL CONSCRIPTION EFFORTS.*

7. PRESIDENT LON NOL ISSUED AN ORDER BROADCAST JANUARY 7 REQUESTING THAT MILITARY SUBSECTORS, WARDS, PSCHOOLS AND TEMPLES IMMEDIATELY DIG ROCKET SHELTERS, HE ALSO PROMISED A REWARD FOR EVERY TERRORIST CAPTURED, DEAD OR ALIVE, AND FOR EVERY ENEMY ROCKET SEIZED AS WELL. COMMENT: CIVIL DEFENSE MESSAGES OF THIS SORT HAVE APPEARED BEFORE IN TIMES OF DEVELOPING ENEMY MILITARY PRESSURE ON PHNOM PENH BUT HAVE SELDOM BEEN FOLLOWED BY ACTUAL CIVIL DEFENSE PREPARATIONS.

GRUNK/FUNK

8. IN THE WAKE OF ENEMY ROCKET ATTACKS AND INCREASING PRESSURE AROUND PHNOM PENH, GRUNK/FUNK DURING THE WEEK
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ISSUED A STEADY STREAM OF WARNINGS TO PEOPLE LIVING WITHIN THE CITY. REVIVING A THEME OF LAST AUGUST, FUNK RADIO ON JANUARY 6 ADVISED ALL FOREIGNERS TO "WITHDRAW HURRIEDLY FROM PHNOM PENH." "IF YOU ARE OBSTINATE IN REMAINING IN PHNOM PENH," THE RADIO CONTINUED, "THE FUNK WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY". GRUNK

MINISTER OF PROPAGANDA AND INFORMATION HU HIM REPEATED
THIS MESSAGE IN A JANUARY
BROADCAST.

9. A SIMILAR FUNK MESSAGE TO KHMER ADVISED THEM TO
LEAVE PHNOM PENH AND AREAS UNDER "TEMPORARY CONTROL" OF
THE GKR AND CROSS OVER TO THE "LIBERATED ZONE"
FOR THEIR OWN SAZETY. THEY WERE ALSO URGED TO FIGHT
AGAINST THE "TRAITORS", OR AT THE VERY LEAST NOT TO CO-
OPERATE WITH THEM. REFERRING TO ROCKET ATTACKS LAST
WEEK WHICH "CRASHED ON THE DEN OF THE U.S. IMPERIALISTS
AND THEIR PHNOM PENH RUNNING DOGS", THE RADIO WARNED
PHNOM PENH RESIDENTS TO TAY AWAY FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY
AND GKR INSTALLATIONS. CHEY CHUM, THE NEW CHAIRMAN OF
THE FUNK PHNOM PENH COMMITTEE, IN A DECEMBER 31 BROADCAST
APPEALED TO INTELLECTUALS, HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS AND
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES TO ABANDON THEIR WORK, TO HELP OVER-
THROW THPSLON NOL GOVERNMENT, AND TO "INVITE" GRUNK TO
ADMINISTER THE COUNTRY.

10. AKI ANNOUNCED ON JANUARY 7 A "TOUR" BY GRUNK INTERIOR
MINISTER HOU YUON OF THE ARE ON THE BANK OF THE MEKONG
"LOCATED ONLY A FEW KILOMETERS EAST OF PHNOM PENH". HOU
YUON WAS ALLEGED TO HAVE MADE MHE VISIT AT THE END OF
DECEMBER TO COINCIDE WITH CPNLAF ATTACKS, AND REPORTEDLY
WENT TO THE PREK TAMERK AND PREK KRABAO AREAS, AMONG
OTHERS. HE ALLEGEDLY TALKED AND MET IN MASS GATHERINGS
WITH "MONKS, INHABITANTS, CADRES AND COMBATANTS" AND HEARD
THEIR "FIRM DETERMINATION" TO FULFILL ALL "THE TASKS OF
THE DRY SEASON".

11. IN AN INTERVIEW TO THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW
(REPORTED JANUARY 4 BY AFP SIHANOUK REPORTEDLY STATED
THAT HIS PRESENCE IN THE "LIBERATED ZONE" WOULD BE USEFUL
TO GRUNK/FUNK'S LIBERATION OF CAMBODIA BUT THAT THE "KHMER
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ROUGE FEAR MY PRESENCE" WHICH WOULD INTRFERE WITH THEIR
EFFORTS AT COMMUNIZATION. HE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT WISH
TO BE IN THEIR WAY. SIHANOUK ALSO REPORTEDLY ADMITTED
THAT, WHILE THE INTERNAL RESISTANCE LEADERS HAVE ASKED HIM
TO SAY IN HIS OFFICIAL PROCLAMATIONS THAT VICTORY IS CLOSE
AT HAND, HE FEELS PERSONALLY IT IS A LONG WAY OFF. HTE
ASCRISES DRV RELUCTANCE TO PROVIDE ARMS TO THE KC TO THE
FACT THAT HANOI AND THE PRG NO LONGER NEED "SIHANOUK-
VILLE- AND PHNOM PENH FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETFGANAM.
IN ANOTHER MESSAGE TO THE PRESS, REPORTED BY AFP ON
JANUARY 4, SIHANOUK REITERATED HIS CLAIM THAT THERE HAVE
BEEN NO DRV/PRG FORCES IN CAMBODIA SINCE JUNE, 1972 AND
REGRETTED THAT CERTAIN MEFSRS OF THE PRESS WERE ACTING

AS /PROPAGANDISTS OF THE LON NOL REGIME..".

12. GRUNK/FUNK PROPAGANDA RECEIVED FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FROM HANOI VNA, WHICH ON JANUARY 4 CARRIED A QUAN DOI NHAN DAN ARTICLE ON THE CAMBODIAN SITUATION CLAIMING THAT THE U.S. "CONTINUES BREATHING LIFE INTO THE MORIBUND LON NOL PUPPET ARMY". THE ARTICLE WENT ON TO STATE THAT THE GKR IS IN A CRITICAL SITUATION, AND " IS WEAKER THAN ANY OTHER VALETS OF THE U.S. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA". IT ANTICIPATED "HEAVIER" DEFEATS FOR THE U.S. IN CAMBODIA IN 1974 WITHOUT, HOWEVER, GOING FAR AS TO PREDICT FINAL VICTORY FOR GRUNK/FUNK

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ECONOMIC

13. THE GKR ANNOUNCED ON JANUARY 3 A 25 PERCENT DEVALUATION, WHICH MOVED THE RATE FROM 302H-TO 377 RIELS. THIS NECESSARY BUT LONG DELAYED MEASURE INITIATED THEUVEW LONG BORET GOVERNMENT'S PROMISED ATTACK ON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. OTHER ECONOMIC MEASURES NOW IN THE IMPLEMENTATION STAGE INCLUDE AN INCREASE IN SALARIES, SETTING NEW PADDY PRICES AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW REFUGEE ORGANIZATION.

14. ON JANUARY 4, IN A BRIEF CEREMONY AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE USG PLEDGED TO MATCH CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EX-CHANGE SUPPORT FUND MADE DV OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN 1974 UP TO A TOTAL OF \$17.5 MILLION.

15. ALTHOUGH SUPPLIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR ARE ADEQUATE TO MEET CONSUMPTION, THE CIVILIAN POL SITUATION

REMAINS SERIOUS, PRIORITY ATTENTION IS NOW CENTERED ON THE THREE INDUSTRIAL FUELS UPON WHICH MUCH OF THE BASIC INDUSTRY AND PUBLIC SERVICES DEPEND. SUPPLIES OF THESE FUELS HAVE BEEN FURTHER REDUCTED BY THE NECESSITY TO BUNKER RICE VESSBVELS IN SAIGON FROM STOCKS DESTINED FOR

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CAMBODIA. MAJOR OIL COMPANIES ARE BEING ASKED TO INCREASE SUPPLIES OF THESE COMMODITIES IN ORDER TO MAKE UP FOR PROJECTED SHORTFALLS.

16. ASSUMING THAT BUNKERING AND OTHER PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED, JANUARY SHOULD SEE LARGE SUPPLIES OF RICE ENTER-ING PHNOM

PENH. AT PRESENT, OVER 40,000 M/T ARE SCHEDULED TO BE SHIPPED VIA THE MEKONG, AND IN THE EVENT ROUTE 4 REMAINS OPEN, AS MUCH AS 19,000 M/T COULD BE TRANSPORTED TO PHNOM PENH BY TRUCK.

MILITARY

17. THE FANK 1ST DIVISION AND 13TH AND 20TH BRIGADES FINALLY UNITED EFFORTS TO REGAIN CONTROL ON JANUARY 6 OF ROUTE 4 CONNECTING PHNOM PENH WITH THE NATION'S ONLY DEEP WATER PORT. COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC ON THE ARTERY WILL, HOWEVER, BE DELAYED UNTIL DAMAGE TO THE ROADBED AND BRIDGES HAS BEEN REPAIRED.

18. THE ENEMY COMMENCED ITS OFFENSIVE NORTHWEST OF PHNOM PENH ON JANUARY 6 BY ATTACKED SEVERAL SMALL POSITIONS BETWEEN THE 7TH DIVISION AT PHNOM BASSET AND THE 23RD BRIGADE AT TOUL LEAP. THESE AND FOLLOW-UP ATTACKS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY THE CAPTURE AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT OF THE POPULATION FROM SEVERAL VILLAGES. FANK REACTED RAPIDLY WITH ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS AND A BRIGADE-SIZED/INFANTRY FORCE TO ENGAGE ADVANCING EEMY ELEMENTS AND TO BLOCK FURTHER PENETRATION. THE MASSED ENEMY TROOPS OFFERED EXCELLENT TARGETS FOR FANK AIR ATTACK AND ARTILLERY FIRE WHICH, ALONG WITH GROUND FORCES, WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE DESTROYED A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE ENEMY'S INTITAL ASSAULT FORCE. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE ENEMY IS BELIEVED TO HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CONTINUE A VERY STRONG EFFORT IN THE NORTHWEST SECTOR, FANK ONCE AGAIN REPOSITIONED TROOPS ON A TIMELY BASIS AND, AT THE TIME OF THIS REPORT, WAS IN A GOOD POSITION TO WITHSTAND THE ENEMY ACTION FROM THIS SECTOR. THE RETURN OF THE 1ST DIVISION TO PHNOM PENH FROM THE ROUTE 4 OPERATION WILL ALSO ASSIST THE OVERALL EFFORT AROUND PHNOM PENH.

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19. THE ENEMY PENETRATION IN THE NORTHWEST SECTOR PERMITTED IT TO LAUNCH SEVERAL ROCKETS TOWARD POCHENTONG AIR BASE. ONLY MINOR DAMAGED WAS INFLICTED, HOWEVER. SCATTERED ROCKET ROUNDS CONTINUED TO FALL ON CITY ITSEL, SOME FROM THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG AND, AT THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD, A FEW FROM THE NORTHWEST.

20. ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY, THE MILITARY SITUATION REMAINED RELATIVELY UNCHANGED DURING THE PAST WEEK. ENEMY

FORCES CONTINUED TO PRESSURE FRIENDLY POSITIONS ALONG THE EAST BANK OF THE MEKONG CAUSING THE FALL OF THE PREK KRABAO POSIION EARLY ON JANUARY 5. IN THE 2ND MILITARY REGION, TAKEO AND KAMPOT WERE SUBJECTED TO CUSTOMARY PRESSURE WITH NEITHER SIDE MAKING ANY SUBSTANTIAL GAINS. IN THE NORTHWESTERN PORITION OF THE COUNTRY, ENEMY ACTIVITY INCREASED SLIGHTLY AS THE CONTEST OVER CONTROL OF THE RICH RICE PRODUCING AREA BEGAN.
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Message Attributes

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